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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the range of variation in the key working conditions of 13 new teachers in 6 different high schools in California. A prologue tells the stories of "Alex" and "Michael" to show how two equally promising young teachers may encounter working conditions as different as a cradle is from a crucible. The second section summarizes how the literature on teacher induction and two broad theories of organizational socialization guided data collection and analysis. The third section describes the data and methods used in the study. Section four presents the working condition factors which arose from the data and briefly describes how these factors varied across the 13 teachers. Section five describes a typology of the working conditions based on the factors in section four and illustrates the typology by presenting case studies of four new teachers, Alex, Michael, Ginny and Kate. Section six returns to the two models of organizational socialization, comparing these alternate models to the four types of working conditions and drawing implications for policymakers and school practitioners to ponder. The conclusion comments on how the typology may be useful to future research. (JD)

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CRUCIBLE OR CRADLE: A TYPOLOGY OF THE WORKING CONDITIONS OF NEW TEACHERS

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CRUCIBLE OR CRADLE: A TYPOLOGY OF THE WORKING CONDITIONS OF NEW TEACHERS

1. PROLOGUE: A Tale of Two New Teachers

In the fall of 1987, thirteen brand new, full time teachers stepped into six high schools in California. For the most part, these new teachers were well trained, properly credentialed, intelligent, and energetic young adults. They harbored all the hopes and anxieties of any organizational newcomer. Each was keenly aware of the many complexities and uncertainties surrounding the task of teaching adolescents. Nonetheless, these eager folks opened their respective schoolhouse doors with high ideals and standards for teaching and learning.

What the newcomers found inside those high school doors during the first year varied dramatically. So did each new teacher's sense of accomplishment, feeling of commitment to the school and profession, and desire to remain in public school teaching. Is there a relation between these variations? Do certain key working conditions contribute to the development and retention of excellent new teachers? As a starting point for these queries, witness the brief accounts of Michael and Alex:

MICHAEL

I compare this school with the one where I student taught, and it just falls short--the superintendent is focused on money matters; the principal wants the school to be perceived as an Advanced Placement school and he hovers over my honors sections; the department is factionalized and catty; the rare times we do meet together as a whole faculty, as a department, or as new teachers, the time spent disseminating information about the bureaucracy outweighs curriculum and teaching issues by 5 to 1. My major frustrations this year are the bureaucracy and the lack of community--of planning time, of observing other teachers, or the opportunity to create lesson plans with other people. At this school I don't have a big net of support; I don't have someone to come in and talk to me and give me feedback in the classroom. I don't really have an advocate.

I'm feeling just overwhelmed with the whole process. I just wonder about the school, I really do. I feel as if--in this particular year, in this particular job, at this particular school--I'm on a continual conveyor belt that's just taking me at this certain pace which is faster than I can possibly go. And the conveyor belt just doesn't slow down or care enough. I think I could be a good teacher, a great one. I hope I could. And yet I'm <u>sure</u>--I'll almost guarantee you--there's no way I'll keep teaching; I'll be out in five years.

ALEX

This school is pretty close to my ideal public high school. The layout of the school, the administrative processes and the way things are run are really good. I can't imagine them being any better. What's helped the most is the general dynamics of how I'm fitting into this department and school and how I'm being accepted and supported by the administration and by the department. When I came in as a new teacher, I thought, no one will believe that what I have to say is correct, or that what I'm doing is right. And that was a real surprise and a real joy to find out that they do believe in what I'm saying, they do believe in what I'm doing in the classroom.

I know I'm going to remain in the teaching profession. If I'm going to teach in a high school, I think I'm pretty set. I could teach here for twenty years and be happy. I'd have a hard time finding a better school. The only thing that would make me change is if I personally got in a rut. Then I wouldn't go out and look for another high school but I'd look for another level of teaching, another style of teaching.

As new teachers, Michael and Alex are more similar than different. Both have excellent training, good communication skills, and each invested abundant time, energy and creativity in the first year of teaching. Their principals and department heads rated them "excellent" as new teachers--ones who would be rehired and eventually offered tenure status. Alex looks forward to the dinner his department will throw in honor of the tenure he expects to earn. He plans to stay in public school teaching over a long, growth-filled career. Michael, however, is unlikely to remain in the public school setting long enough to be so honored. He nearly resigned in December, and as he projects himself into the future, Michael cannot imagine remaining in public school teaching.

These two new teachers entered different high school worlds. Their brief comments reveal vivid contrasts in the nature of their experiences during the first year. As the year drew to a close, both Alex and Michael dragged with exhaustion. For Alex, opportunities for stimulation and nurturing within the school setting offset the fatigue. Michael, on the other hand, felt thwarted, constrained and pressured by conditions within his school. The work setting itself added weight to the already heavy burden of learning to teach.

The loss to students of an outstanding teacher such as Michael is a tragedy for public education. How can school organizations prevent such tragedies? Although Alex and Michael are similar as individuals, the key working conditions they experienced were as different as a cradle is from a crucible. The specific nature of these differences is the subject of this paper.

How can policymakers, administrators, and experienced teachers contribute to the developing and retaining--rather than the battering and fleeing--of high performing new teachers? The first step is to understand what specific kinds of working conditions cradle new teachers, providing a balance of challenge and nurturance. Conversely, what conditions place the new teacher in a crucible where organizational demands and pressures add to the already difficult task of learning to teach?

The next decade is likely to be one of increased hiring and of continued public demand for high quality teachers. Once we understand specifically how working conditions of new teachers vary, we can begin to explore how such variations arise and what relation they may have to performance, commitment, and retention. Such understanding is a prerequisite to beginning to design and manage these working conditions with the goal of generating a cadre of quality secondary teachers committed to careers in public education.

This paper describes the range of variation in the key working conditions of thirteen new teachers in six different high schools in California. The second section below summarizes how the literature on teacher induction and two broad theories of organizational socialization guided data collection and analysis. The third section describes the data and methods used in this study. Section four presents the working condition factors which arose from the data and briefly describes how these factors varied across the thirteen teachers. Section five describes a typology of the working conditions based on the factors in section four and illustrates the typology by presenting case studies of four new teachers. Section six returns to the two models of organizational socialization, comparing these alternate models to the four types of working conditions and drawing implications for policymakers and school practitioners to ponder. The conclusion comments on how the typology may be useful to future research.

2. NEW TEACHER WORKING CONDITIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION

The Process of Organizational Socialization

How do the working conditions of new high school teachers vary? Research for the thirteen case studies was guided by a model which incorporates two broad theories of organizational socialization. The entry year of teaching is viewed as a case of socialization during organizational entry.

According to the classic definition, socialization is the process of change by which the individual acquires the values, attitudes, interests, skills and knowledge of the membership group (Merton, 1957). Socialization to the organization serves two important purposes: to bind the individual to the organization through development of feelings of attachment and satisfaction; and, to insure the individual develops the attitudes, values and skills that are congruent with the needs of the organization (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

Within this frame, working conditions become a key instrument in the socialization of new teachers. How the organization views newcomers--as objects to be molded to fit organizational needs versus as unique individuals with agency and voice--influences the nature of an individual's entry experiences. Two major lines of socialization theory, functional and interactional, have different implications for how to think about--and how to treat--new teachers during the beginning year.

Functional Theories

In the functional line of socialization theory, the individual is a passive subject of the functional demands and structural characteristics of the various agents of socialization (Becker, 1956; Merton, 1957; Lortie, 1975). In this view, new teachers would be treated as empty vessels to be filled with knowledge, skills and attitudes during the entry period. The particular characteristics of individual new teachers make little difference in either what the organization pours or in how rapidly the pouring proceeds. In the process of functional socialization, we would expect working conditions to be relatively fixed and static; they appear

simply to "happen" to the individual as a result of organizational routines. Those within the organization would expect the new teacher to accept the working conditions as givens and to fit into existing organizational routines.

Interactional Theories

Interactional theories, on the other hand, emphasize the role of the individual as an active participant whose responses to the functional demands of the organization help to shape the outcomes of the socialization process (Brim, 1966; Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Van Maanen, 1976). In this view, individuals, not organizations, create and sustain beliefs and determine what is and is not functional (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Thus the existence of individual differences means the organization must treat each new teacher as a partially full vessel whose unique characteristics help determine what the organization pours, as well as how and when. In the process of interactive socialization, working conditions would become a dynamic means for mutual accommodation between individual and organization during the entry period. Those within the organization would tend to tailor working conditions to meet the anticipated and expressed needs of the individual new teacher.

The Case of New Teachers

In this paper I will assess how the nature of the socialization process--functional versus interactive--is reflected in differences in the key working conditions of new teachers. What do we already know about the role of working conditions in teacher socialization and induction?

In the growing body of teacher socialization and induction literature, the experiences of the first year have generally been found to have an important influence on the professional development of a new teacher (Bush, 1966; Ryan, 1974; Fuller & Brown, 1975; Ryan, Newman, Applegate, Lesley, Flora, Johnston, 1980; Lacey, 1977; McDonald, 1980; Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Huling-Austin, 1987). Commitment to teaching, performance in the classroom, and retention in the profession are powerfully influenced by the everyday working conditions which surround the new teacher (Howey, Yarger & Joyce, 1978; Schelchty & Vance, 1981; Chapman, 1983; Johnston & Ryan, 1983; McLaughlin, Pfeifer, Swanson-Owens, & Yee, 1986).

Consequently, discussions of working conditions figure prominently in recent educational research and policy analysis (Sizer, 1984; Goodlad, 1984; Lieberman & Miller, 1984; California Commission on the Teaching Profession, 1985; Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986; Rosenholtz, 1987; Odell, 1987).

Two problems in this body of literature helped frame the present study. First, the literature uses the term working conditions--or its alternates, workplace conditions, school conditions, circumstances of teaching--is used imprecisely; these interchangeable terms cover a broad variety of factors ranging from characteristics of the teaching profession--status, salary structure, career structure, credentialing and tenure standards--to circumstances within districts and schools--resources, materials, class size, support structures, teaching assignments. When the term working conditions is defined at all, it is by example.

As a consequence, this study identifies a set of key working conditions for new teachers which are both influential to commitment, performance and retention, and relatively amenable--that is, subject to change at the discretion of administrators and teachers within the district, school and department. Specifically, the study isolates two dimensions of high school working conditions which are especially malleable and consequential for new teachers: (1) the level of difficulty of the assignment, and (2) the level and type of support available within the organization (Grant & Zeichner, 1981; Isaacson, 1981; Clewitt, 1984; Gehrke, 1987).

A second problem is that much of the teacher induction and socialization research examines the working conditions of new teachers in the aggregate--that is, across the level of the profession (Waller, 1932; Lortie, 1976; Lacey, 1977; Veenman, 1981, Griffin, 1985). We know a great deal about the generally unfavorable nature of working conditions for new teachers. Such analysis suggests that both the degree of difficulty of the teaching assignment and the level of support available from various sources within the organization are highly problematic for new teachers (Grant and Zeichner, 1981; Little, 1982; Griffin, 1985; Huling-Austin, 1987; Jensen, 1987); the number of preparations, course topics, type of students, and number of room changes are among the most consequential aspects of a given teaching

assignment (Hoffman, Edwards, O'Neal, Barnes, & Paulissen, 1986)--yet, rather than being eased into the teaching profession, new teachers carry a burden of difficulty equal to or greater than that of twenty year veterans (Waller, 1932; Lortie, 1975; Newberry, 1977; Sizer, 1984; Clewitt, 1984). The weakness in this research is that the aggregate nature of the findings masks exceptions to the general pattern (Veenman, 1984). For instance, some beginners, in recognition of their unique status as "developing" teachers, do have relatively favorable assignments--fewer preps, a single room, motivated students (Grant & Zeichner, 1981). The present study was thus designed to discover and describe variations across a range of working conditions from unfavorable to favorable.

Working Conditions as Agents of Socialization

Both people and structural characteristics of the social setting act as agents in socialization. In the organizations literature, both functionalists and interactionists examine a wide variety of external agents of socialization--environmental, organizational, relevant group, task characteristic factors--which constrain the newcomer and thus facilitate the binding and molding processes (Van Maanen, 1976). Many studies examine separately a variety of kinds of socialization agents; few, however, isolate working conditions as agents in socialization or seek to specify the working conditions which make a difference in particular settings such as high schools (Veenman, 1984).

The Key Working Conditions for New High School Teachers

Although we can predict the relatively unfavorable nature of working conditions for new teachers, a major purpose of this research was to explore and describe variations in these conditions. Since working conditions rarely have been studied as agents of teacher socialization, or at the level of the individual and the school, a qualitative and exploratory approach made possible the collection of varied data and the discovery of unexpected variables affecting the nature of working conditions. A review of the literature led to gathering data in two dimensions of working conditions in high schools.

a. Level of Difficulty of the Assignment

The level of difficulty of a new teacher's assignment is the amount of complexity and uncertainty involved in the daily teaching task (Isaacson, 1981). Initially the study defined the level of difficulty of the assignment in terms of four factors: (a) the number of preparations; (b) the number of room changes; (c) the kinds of students; and (d) misassignment, or the degree of match between the courses assigned and the teacher's subject matter expertise and experience. For instance, an assignment involving remedial students, three preparations, no formal education or experience in these preparations, and three classroom changes during the day is a relatively high level of difficulty. In contrast, an assignment which includes highly motivated students, two preparations, formal coursework and experience in teaching these preparations, and no change of rooms is a comparatively low level of difficulty.

b. The Level and Type of Support

Support is one important way a newcomer reduces the difficulties and uncertainties and makes sense of the complexities involved in learning to teach (Isaacson, 1981). Initially, this study isolated two types of support as especially important in the socialization of new teachers: (1) social and emotional support--obtaining the respect and acceptance of teaching colleagues; and (2) substantive support--opportunities for (a) prep-specific assistance with curriculum information, planning and materials; (b) observing others teach and feedback from being observed by experienced colleagues; (c) acquiring general skills and knowledge about teaching.

In order to describe these dimensions in detail--as well as to capture any unexpected factors related to level of difficulty and level of support--the study employed a qualitative approach to data gathering. The next section describes in greater detail the methodology used to explore variations in working conditions.

3. THE DATA

Sample Characteristics

The definition of "new teacher" is a person in the first full time year of paid high school teaching. This definition excludes part-time and/or unpaid internships or student teaching. Nearly all of those in the study were fresh out of teacher training, but age ranged from early twenties to late forties. All but one new teacher in the sample was fully credentialed and had completed a fifth-year teacher training program.

I was interested in how the key working conditions of new teachers vary by district, school, and department. Accordingly, I selected new teachers across three districts, six schools, and eight departments. Four of the six high schools serve predominantly middle class, surburban communities; two serve lower-middle class and working class communities and have more racially and ethnically diverse student bodies. I was also interested in differences between individual new teachers within the same department. Thus the sample of thirteen includes five pairs of new teachers--each pair working within the same department. Appendix A illustrates how the teachers were distributed across these dimensions.

Since research leads us to predict most new teachers will experience unfavorable working conditions, the sampling for this study was purposive in order to increase the probability of obtaining variation. A pilot study helped identify a department with relatively favorable working conditions. A second department from the same school was selected by asking the principal and the district staff development person to name a department that would likely provide working conditions different from those in the first department. The other schools, districts and departments were selected on the basis of similar, brief screening interviews by phone.

I took care to regard these preliminary judgments about the likely nature of working conditions as highly tentative. Once the sample selection was complete, I ignored the information obtained during screening. In addition, I scheduled interviews in random order;

there was no attempt during data collection or analysis to group the interviews in any systematic way related to the screening judgments.

Data Collection

The focus of each case study was the new teacher's experiences between August and March of the first year of teaching. Data collection relied primarily on in-depth interviews; additional strategies included observations of department meetings, and collection of relevant documents.

Teacher socialization takes place in a dynamic setting including many variables. The interview, rather than a pointed survey, is an especially valuable tool in studying the complex process of socialization because its open-ended nature makes possible the collection of unanticipated, varied and idiosyncratic data. The semi-structured, in-depth interviews used in this study yielded context-specific data and anecdotes illustrating the nature of each new teacher's working conditions, how the teachers responded to these conditions, how the conditions may have changed over time, and how the teachers assessed the adequacy of these conditions in light of their individual needs. The primary respondents were the new teachers themselves. Secondary respondents included each new teacher's principal and department head, as well as the district administrator most knowledgeable about district policies, programs and practices pertaining to new teachers.

Data Analysis

The central analytic strategy was the Constant Comparative Method (Glasser & Strauss, 1967). A fundamental component of this method was pattern matching--the comparison of an empirically based pattern with one or more predicted patterns (Yin, 1984, p. 103).

At the outset, the general prediction of this study was that working conditions vary from favorable to unfavorable. This working proposition was translated into two hypothetical prototypes (patterns) of working conditions derived from a review of the literature (see Appendix B). The prototypes specify decision rules for what constitutes a favorable versus an unfavorable (a) level of difficulty of the assignment, and (b) level and type of support. Initial data analysis was guided by comparing data to the two rival prototypes. The prototypes

provided the grounding conditions from which the iterative process of coding data, comparing data with the prototypes, and reformulating the initial proposition proceeded.

Data analysis began immediately after the first interview and proceeded iteratively--that is, moving back and forth from data collection and coding of data on the one hand, to pattern matching the data to the prototypes and the building of new working propositions on the other (Glasser & Strauss, 1967). In this constant comparative method, each return to new interview data was an opportunity to confirm or disconfirm the original working proposition and to reformulate that proposition in light of new evidence. In this way, new factors associated with level of difficulty and level of support arose from the data; likewise, some of the original factors were modified or dropped. The next section describes the range of working conditions experienced by the thirteen new teachers in terms of factors grounded in the data.

4. HOW THE WORKING CONDITIONS OF NEW HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS VARY: A TYPOLOGY

What factors must we look for in trying to understand how working conditions vary? A major purpose of this exploratory study was to map the territory and provide constructs for use in future quantitative research across a greater number of teachers and settings. Analysis of the experiences of the thirteen teachers in this study revealed an expanded, more fine-grained set of factors than anticipated in the framework prototypes (Appendix B). An accurate picture of the working conditions of these thirteen teachers--one which meaningfully depicts the differences and similarities encountered during the first year--requires a more detailed elaboration of factors than typically found in previous research.

VARIATIONS IN THE LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY OF THE ASSIGNMENT

Factors of Difficulty Emerging from the Data

The level of difficulty of the teaching assignment, once again, is the amount of complexity and uncertainty involved in the daily teaching task. The original prototype anticipated that differences in task characteristics alone--number of preparations, number of room changes,

misassignment, kinds of students--would be sufficient to distinguish meaningful variation in this dimension. The data in this study revealed a new dimension of level of difficulty, as well as several additional factors which affect the level of difficulty a new high school teacher experiences. Factors related to level of difficulty divide into two categories: (1) task characteristics (T)--including the anticipated factors and some which were unanticipated; and (2) expectations or opportunities (EO) surrounding the task assignment.

Appendix C defines the eleven factors which arose from the data, the decision rules employed to determine whether each teacher experienced a high or a low level of difficulty for each factor, and the decision rule for determining the overall level of difficulty across the set of eleven factors.

How Difficulty Factors Varied Across Teachers

Which factors of difficulty were most commonly unfavorable--that is, of high difficulty--among the thirteen new teachers? Table 1 presents the results of a tabulation of the factors.

TABLE 1: FREQUENCY OF "HIGH" RATINGS FOR THE ELEVEN INDICATORS OF DIFFICULTY

# of New Teachers (Out of 13 Total) Who Rated "High" (= Unfavorable) On This Indicator		Factor Type	Indicator
most common	10	EO	Uncertainty About Employment Status
	9	T	Number of Rooms
	8	T	Number of Preps
		T	Adequacy of Texts, Materials & Equip
	6	T	Track of Students Taught
		EO	Opportunity to Prepare During Summer
	5	T	Adequacy of Written Information
	4	T	Age and Grade Level of Stu's Taught
		EO	Extraordinary Time Demands
least common	3	T	Match Between Bkgr/Trng & Course Assn
		EO	Fixed Performance Pressure

Based on these results, it appears that task factors contributed somewhat more frequently to high levels of difficulty than did factors related to expectations and opportunities. The exception is employment uncertainty, which was endemic among the thirteen new teachers.

These frequencies need to be interpreted in light of the purposive nature of the sample; that is, since favorable working conditions are purposely overrepresented, it is likely that a representative sample would result in a greater frequency of "high"--or unfavorable--ratings on level of difficulty factors than observed here.

VARIATIONS IN THE TYPE AND LEVEL OF SUPPORT

Factors of Support Emerging from the Data

Support from various sources within the organization is one way a new teacher reduces the difficulties and uncertainties and makes sense of the complexities involved in learning to teach. Once again, the data from this study revealed several unexpected variables associated with support. Twenty separate factors of support emerged from the data. These factors may be categorized in three general groups: (1) social and emotional support (SE)--experiences which relate to the new teacher's emerging feelings of self-confidence, competence, and sense of belonging to a constructive and caring professional community; (2) substantive support (SUB)--assistance with matters directly related to planning instruction and performing in the classroom; and (3) the type of format or structure of support (F)--the manner in which support is "packaged" by the organization or "accessed" by the new teacher.

Appendix D summarizes the twenty support factors which arose from the data and provides the decision rules for determining the level of support--high versus low--on the individual factors, as well as the overall level of support across the set of twenty factors.

How Support Factors Varied Across Teachers

Which factors of support were most commonly favorable--that is, rated "high"--among the thirteen new teachers? Table 2 presents the results of a tabulation of the factors.

TABLE 2: FREQUENCY OF "HIGH" RATINGS FOR THE TWENTY INDICATORS OF SUPPORT

# Of New Teachers (Out of 13 Total) Who Rated High (= Favorable) On This Indicator		Factor Type	Indicator
most common	11	SUB	Schoolwide Personnel, Resources, Programs
		F	Freq of Partic in Dept Decisionmaking
	10	SE	Respect from Veterans and Administration
		SE	Acceptance, Warmth, Acknowledgement
		SE	Safe to Share Problems
	9	SE	Opportunities to Innovate or Be Creative
	8	SUB	Value and Quality of Formal Training
		SUB	Extent of Expertise Among Colleagues
	7	F	Adaptive Help Frequently Available
		F	NT Has an Advocate vs Vet Teachers/Admin
		SUB	Help w/ Planning/Materials for each Prep
		F	Amount of Oppor's for Informal Interaction
		F	Admin Supports a Stable Tg Environment
	6	SE	Considerate about NT's Employment Status
		SUB	Value and Quality of Informal Interaction
		F	Amount of Formal Training
	5	SUB	Value & Quality of Dept Decisionmaking
		SUB	Opp's for Valued Feedbk Aft Obser'g
		F	Access to Expertise of Colleagues
least common	4	F	Opportunities to Be Obs'd & Observe Others

While social and emotional acceptance was the most common type of support available to new teachers, these results show substantive support to be the type least frequently available. Nearly all the new teachers expressed a preference for learning about how to teach from formal and informal interaction with department colleagues; sadly, these highly valued substantive types of support were those least frequently available to the new teachers in this study. Especially troubling is the fact that although interaction and decisionmaking within the

context of department meetings occurs frequently, these meetings rarely attain high value or quality in the view of new teachers.

Once again, the purposive nature of the sample means these results are biased toward favorable levels of support. A representative sample would likely result in fewer "high" ratings than observed here.

OVERALL LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY AND LEVEL OF SUPPORT

In summary, analysis of the data resulted in the identification of eleven factors related to level of difficulty and twenty factors for level of support. New teachers were scored as high or low on each factor. Totaling the factors scored "high" within each dimension resulted in an overall high or low rating for level of difficulty and another overall rating for level of support. Table 3 is a display of the frequency distribution of high and low scores for level of difficulty and level of support for the thirteen new teachers in the study.

TABLE 3: FREQUENCIES FOR OVERALL LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY AND LEVEL OF SUPPORT

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

	# of Indicators Rated Hi	# of NTs	
	0		
	1	1	
	2		n = 7
Low	3	2	
	4	4	
	5		
High	6	3	
	7	1	
	8	1	n = 6
	9		
	10	1	
	11		

LEVEL OF SUPPORT

	# of Indicators Rated Hi	# of NTs	
	0		
	1		
	2		
	3		
	4	1	
	5		
	6	2	n = 7
	7	3	
	8		
Low	9	1	
	10		
	11		
High	12		
	13	1	
	14		
	15		n = 6
	16		
	17	1	
	18	3	
	19	1	
	20		

The next section introduces a typology which results from combining these two overall dimensions.

5. COMBINING THE LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY AND THE LEVEL OF SUPPORT--A TYPOLOGY OF WORKING CONDITIONS AND ILLUSTRATIVE CASE STUDIES

Four general types of working conditions result from combining overall high versus low ratings across the two dimensions. Table 4 displays the typology, including the descriptive labels and the number of teachers associated with each type:

TABLE 4: A TYPOLOGY COMBINING THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF WORKING CONDITIONS

		LEVEL OF SUPPORT	
		High (Favorable)	Low (Unfavorable)
LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY	Low (Favorable)	Nurtured n = 3	Ignored n = 4
	High (Unfavorable)	Coached n = 3	Tested n = 3

Thinking back to Alex and Michael, whose brief accounts of the first year opened this paper, we can begin to explore the validity and meaning of the typology. Michael falls in the "tested" quadrant of the working conditions typology because he rated high in level of difficulty and low in support. This combination represents the most unfavorable working conditions. Alex, on the other hand, is an example of the most favorable or "nurtured" quadrant of the typology. He rated high in level of support and low in level of difficulty. The "coached" and "ignored" quadrants are mixed types, favorable on one dimension and unfavorable on the other. How valid are the distinctions implied in this typology? Do the actual experiences of teachers in the four quadrants vary in meaningful ways?

These questions will be addressed first quantitatively, by looking at how factors differed between paired types, and then qualitatively, through case studies of four new teachers.

FACTOR COMPARISONS AMONG WORKING CONDITION TYPES

What is the precise nature of the factor differences among the four types? Which types are most similar to one another? Which are most different, and how? To answer these questions, I conducted a factor by factor comparison of each of the six possible pairings of types. A factor was judged to have differed if, for example, zero of three "tested" teachers scored high in comparison to three of three "coached" teachers scoring high. Appendix E contains the complete results of this analysis, including the decision rules employed and a numbered listing of the difficulty and support factors which differed. The case studies will bring some of these factor differences to life.

What is the overall picture of how these types differ? Table 5 summarizes the data in Appendix E more succinctly in order to emphasize the relative degree of differences between types.

TABLE 5: THE PROPORTION OF FACTORS DIFFERING BETWEEN PAIRED TYPES

	The Proportion Differing Among 11 Factors DIFFICULTY	The Proportion Differing Among 20 Factors SUPPORT	Col.1 & 2 AVERAGE
NURTURED vs. TESTED	.55	.55	.55
COACHED vs. IGNORED	.27	.65	.46
NURTURED vs. COACHED	.27	.10	.19
IGNORED vs. TESTED	.40	.25	.33
NURTURED vs. IGNORED	.20	.55	.38
COACHED vs. TESTED	.20	.75	.48

These results indicate that, as might be expected, the two extreme types, nurtured and tested, differ the most overall--that is, based on the average of difficulty and support combined. Coached and nurtured new teachers are the most similar; they differ in only 19% of the combined factors. Clearly, the typology captures differences in the level of difficulty and the level and type of support new teachers experience. Whether these differences are consequential to performance, commitment and retention is the next test of the validity of the typology; this task is reserved for a future paper.

CASE STUDIES: FOUR NEW TEACHERS

A remaining task for the present study is to explore how the quantitative differences indicated above play out in the every day experiences and feelings of new teachers. I have chosen to let the new teachers speak for themselves on this issue. The teachers I interviewed

spoke candidly, at length, and, for the most part, eloquently about the nature of their experiences during the first year. Who better to tell the story than those who lived it? The varied accounts of these new teachers, in their own words, capture the reality of the first year more vividly than an outsider's analytical prose.

While opting to illustrate the typology through the personal accounts of four different teachers, I cannot altogether abandon the responsibility to provide some compass points for orientation. My goal in presenting the case studies is twofold: to respect the integrity and communication skills of the new teachers by allowing them, uninterrupted, to tell their own stories; and, to clarify how the experiences of a given teacher place him squarely within one of the categories of the typology.

With these goals in mind, I present below four brief personal accounts, each representing one of the four types of working conditions. Running parallel to each case study, in the right margin, are my own annotations. These marginal comments serve two purposes: to illustrate how particular experiences, feelings or anecdotes exemplify the factors underlying the typology; and, to refer the reader occasionally to an illuminating contrast in another of the four case studies.

Now, a word about the selection of teachers and of the passages and anecdotes which comprise the case studies. Alex, Michael, Ginny and Kate each represent one of the thirteen new teachers; they are not composites. Individuals were selected because, on the whole, they typified the characteristics shared by those in the same quadrant. Marginal cases--those near the border between high and low on either level of difficulty or level of support--were purposefully avoided. Appendix A contains a brief description of the community and student population of the case study schools.

The passages included in the case studies also represent purposeful selection. Each of the teacher interviews ranged from two to four hours long. From this wealth of information, I selected passages which I felt represented fairly the overall experience of the teacher. At the conclusion of each interview, I summarized for each teacher my dominant impressions of how

they felt about the first year and why. I asked the teachers to correct my summary until it reflected an accurate picture. These summary accounts guided my selection of passages to include in the case studies.

The purely unfavorable and favorable types--Tested and Nurtured-- speak first, followed by the mixed types--Ignored and Coached.

Nurtured
ALEX: Mr. Wizard

This school is pretty close to my ideal public high school. The layout of the school, the administrative processes and the way things run are really good. I can't imagine them being any better. What's helped the most is the general dynamics of how I'm fitting into this department and school and how I'm being accepted by the administration and by the department. When I came in as a new teacher, I thought, no one will believe that what I have to say is correct, or that what I'm doing is right. I'll always be contradicted by the department or the administration won't stand behind me. But essentially they have. And that was a real surprise and a real joy to find out that they do believe in what I'm saying, they do believe in what I'm doing in the classroom.

Structure
Nourishes NTs

Positive Affect

They've gone out of their way to structure my day so I can succeed. I have one room all day, that's the best part. In this department every room is used all day long, and most of the other science teachers have to change rooms during the day. But the department made a decision to schedule the new chemistry teacher into one room all day. Even before they knew me, they wanted to create the best possible schedule for whoever was the new teacher. It's a blessing.

Dept Teachers
Anticipate NT Needs
& Adjust Difficulty

Another example is how I was paid for two weeks last summer to select a new textbook and to begin planning the new chemistry curriculum. I had in mind a tutorial system of teaching, so I thought the best way would be to have a single text for both honors and regular chem--one that also had more advanced sections for the honors. It took a lot of searching. They got me together with Frank--the chemistry teacher from Washington High--when I was selecting the book. It's the first text I've ever selected, so I wanted Frank to be sure the material in the text was up to par. Once I narrowed it down, Frank helped me select. So I have a text that really fits my teaching style.

Vs. Ginny's
Late Hire

Adaptive Support

In relation to me as a new teacher, the department head's role is to make my life as easy as possible. Basically, to be my moral support. I can ask him any time to help me out. He's a very friendly teacher, very human, which I also try to be. We both have the same kind of goals in teaching, so even if he wasn't my department head, I'd look to him. We both have the same prep, which works great for me. I love it. We get along great.

DH as Advocate

Vs. Ginny &
Michael's DHs

As a department, we talk constantly throughout the day as we bump into each other in the office or eat lunch. We have a central office that connects all the science classrooms. Our individual desk cubby areas are all in this office. So we always cross paths in here throughout the day; we're constantly in contact with each other, and that really helps. I love it. There's no personality conflicts or power trips by anyone in the department. Our daily lunches are notorious across the school for the hilarious jokes and stories that are told. And every Thursday we have a department meeting at lunch. No one person takes on a task completely--it's too big, and there's always someone to help.

Import of Spacial
Arrangements in
Facilitating
Collaboration

For instance, I was really frustrated the first quarter not to get any excitement or response from the chem students. Then it happened I went to a weekend conference and one of the speakers described a superconductor project at his school and told us the procedure. I took it

Innovation
Welcome Here

and decided to do the same thing at Athens. But pretty quickly it got to the point where it was too big and I needed some support, some help. And the physics teacher jumped right in and got his students involved. I never would have been able to do this without his support. And the support of the whole department in the sense of covering our classes when we need to go to IBM to get materials. So the whole department is getting involved. And that's usually the way it is. We'll all chip in for anyone who needs help. And it just so happens that as a new teacher I need the help the most often.

Access to Expertise of Colleagues

So there's a lot of really good classroom-related help and good moral support; all the science teachers have been first year teachers before. It seems like they really know how to make me feel at ease. I just keep comparing this department with the one where I interned last year. That was an all male department, all in their 50's and 60's, and they were regimented, stale, and boring. I would have gone nuts if I was there right now; I would have been on my own--literally on my own. This department has just been so much the opposite of that.

Positive Affect

Respect of Colleagues

The first day I came to school as Mr. Wizard was the most satisfying day of all. Mr. Wizard wears pink stripped pants, big-toed mountain boots, some God-awful shirt totally out of date, a big tie that doesn't match, a white, curly Afro wig, lab glasses like spectacles, and a white lab coat with a Mr. Wizard name tag on it. Essentially he's a character I've created that comes in the day before the test and does a review session with the students. This kind of breaks the tension. Mr. Wizard is a source of excitement, something new and different. The administration could have gotten very uptight about this. Here's this guy dressing up weird, who knows what he's doing. But instead, they just laughed and figured out it was okay.

Vs. Fate of Michael's Peer Tutor Idea

Creativity Welcome

The principal is great. In September he asked me if I wanted to be the CSF advisor, but I told him I just don't have time. Instead of making my life miserable, he understood and didn't pressure me. And he's really supportive of my new ideas--the bizarreness of my Mr. Wizard days, the superconductor project, the concept of chemistry tutorial sessions. In all of this he hasn't made roadblocks for me. He's <u>cleared</u> roadblocks in the sense of making it possible for me to do these unusual things. For example, to create the superconductors, I needed the kids to stay all night at the lab; instead of saying no, he told me what I needed to do to make it happen. So the principal and administration do what they can to help me do new ideas.

Administration
*responds to NT's expressed needs
*clears roadblocks

<u>LESSON</u>:
This School Hears Me

I <u>know</u> I'm going to remain in the teaching profession. If I'm going to teach in a high school, I think I'm pretty set. I could teach here for twenty years and be happy. I'd have a hard time finding a better school. The only thing that would make me change is if I personally got in a rut. Then I wouldn't go out and look for another high school, but I'd look for another level of teaching, another style of teaching.

<u>PROGNOSIS</u>:
Growth-filled Career

Tested
MICHAEL: The Continual Conveyor Belt

My major frustrations this year are the bureaucracy and the lack of community--of planning time, of observing other teachers, or the opportunity to create lesson plans with other people. At this school I don't have a big net of support; I don't have someone to come in and talk to me and give me feedback in the classroom. I don't really feel like I have an advocate.

Structure Frustrates NT

Lacks Substantive Support

Isolation

At Aiers the honors program is the baby--cared for and nurtured. That's where a lot of the attention goes. As so it is both an honor, a responsibility, and a liability to teach honors. It's a high risk job because of how vulnerable you become; the parents and kids are extremely involved and competitive. So as a teacher in that program, I feel a lot of pressure.

In the Fish Bowl

As teachers we're very isolated, and there isn't time built in for staff development. Collaborative lesson planning is really difficult. Most people are working very hard during their one prep. Right after I was hired, the department head and I agreed that we should meet at the beginning and end of the summer to talk about curriculum. When we met one of the first things she told me was how little I would know coming from the teacher training program at Stanford. That put me off. She was right, but its kind of a funny way to welcome somebody. We had one day between semesters when I got to meet with the department head for an hour and a half that day. You know how much I got in an hour and a half from her? I mean, how much I could get if I could do that once a week! But she doesn't have time. So we do these five minute snippets in the first period prep, or we do it after school.

Negative Affect

Lacks Respect

Lacks Access to Expertise of Colleagues

At this school I have support in the fact that I can go talk to someone and get a hug or be given access to numerous files, but I don't have someone to come in and talk to me. I like a constructive criticism. I like to be watched because I like to get some tips, insights to what I can do better. So one major complaint of mine is that lack of real, tangible support in the form of counselling and observing. I'm teaching at a school that has so many distinguished teachers, and yet there has hardly been a moment where I could go observe or work with another teacher. I think that's ridiculous. We've got all these award winning teachers and I, the new teacher who needs so much help, can't seem to get to them. Team teaching would help me, or observing, where I could learn some of the skills that I lack. It's really difficult for me to learn by reading files. I've always been good at learning hands-on.

Non-Adaptive Support

Lacks Access

No one knows how much work goes into the grading and reading of English papers. The work I bring home is just unbearable, or at least undo-able. Having to supposedly teach so many kids, and feeling like I don't have any sense of who I'm teaching; or being frustrated about kids slipping through the cracks that I can't reach. I feel immobilized to reach out as much as I normally would. Collecting that many papers, reading that many quizzes, reading the books--I don't have time to do all this, and yet I'm doing it. I guess I just feel like I'm doing it half-assed compared to how I really would like. And so I don't think I'm as good. Last year as an intern, I was around an 8 out of 10 as a new teacher; this year I'm down to a 5. That's not a good feeling.

Unusual Time Demands (like Kate)

Decreased Sense of Competence (unlike Kate)

At department meetings it's typical that, even when there is an interesting potential for curriculum discussion--like when Jean presented about the Cal Lit program--we don't do a good job on it. It's thrown out, and rushed and half done. We don't get to enjoy the fruits of this kind of topic and discussion. Instead, the amount of information about bureaucracy outweighs the curriculum part by 5 to 1. And there's usually a general lack of communication in our department, of feeling comfortable to share an experience or express yourself. For instance, the department head often makes critical, openly negative comments about other teachers. I can't help but wonder if she talks about me like that when I'm not there.

Low Quality of Professional Interaction

Mistrust & Negative Affect

The superintendent made an appearance once at a faculty meeting. He talked about how there was a window broken at this school, that they're renting off an old school site to make money. It seemed to me like having nothing to do with education. It's been frustrating comparing our school and our district priorities to the other public school where I interned and to private schools I know about.

NT and District Priorities Differ

The principal led monthly meetings after school in the fall for new teachers. I guess it was stuff I needed to learn, but it had nothing to do with support. It felt like we were just being lectured to and it was very tiring. The content didn't have much to do with what are some of the problems you've been facing, and how can we all work on solving them. It was really designed to disseminate information, and not to problem solve. I also wonder about the principal's priorities. I'm interested in some of the things the students need that are not academic. Last year I took a peer counselling class and got trained in that. I'd love to initiate that here, but they don't seem to have the money or inclination for that. I talked to the principal, and he said they won't offer that as something for students to take.

When Help Harms

Non-Adaptive NT Meetings

LESSON:
This School Rejects My Ideas and Needs

I'm feeling just overwhelmed with the whole process. I just wonder about the school, I really do. I feel as if--in this particular year, in this particular job, at this particular school--I'm on a continual conveyor belt that's just taking me at this certain pace which is faster than I can possibly go. And the conveyor belt just doesn't slow down or care enough. I think I could be a good teacher, a great one. I hope I could. And yet I'm <u>sure</u>--I'll almost guarantee you--there's no way I'll keep teaching; I'll be out in five years.

PROGNOSIS:
Flight from Public Teaching

Ignored
GINNY: Babysitting

I'm teaching three sections of honors freshman social science and two sections of U.S. history. I've had the same room all day, including my prep, for both semesters. I was hired specifically because of my background and preparation to teach those three honors sections.

Favorable Assignment

But I only have one year assignment. A criticism I have is that it was not made clear to me during the interview that I was replacing someone on leave. I didn't find out until after I was hired. During the interview it was discussed as if this was a regular opening. So pretty soon I've got to go out and look for other jobs and it's kind of depressing. The whole system is screwy; the way they treat new teachers is not very professional. It seems like they're filling a position just to have it filled--like they're not real concerned about the quality of work that goes into the position. It's communicated in the whole way they hire you so late, usually not until August. In February I went to talk to the personnel director about my prospects for next year, and he would not even talk to me. He could have sat down and said, listen, this is the situation we're in, and it doesn't look like we're going to need you next year. Instead, he said there's no reason to talk to you now--if you see a job in the district, apply for it. Other than that, he wouldn't give me any assistance. I thought that's not much of a way to treat an employee.

Insecure Job Status

District Insensitive & Unresponsive

The big challenge in teaching has been keeping the kids interested. For most kids, history is boring. Just trying to motivate them and get them interested is the challenge. I find it frustrating teaching on this level. One reason I might like to teach college is you don't have to make it interesting. I'm not an entertainer. And I've had to develop the freshman honors curriculum all myself. I got a little help from other teachers, but not a lot. Our styles are different, or they've taught a similar subject, but to different kinds of kids. So I'm ambivalent about the general kind of help I've gotten. I get along with everybody in the department. They're helpful to the extent that I ask for help. But there's nothing organized at the department level. No one sits down and says, here it is, go to it. You have to seek it out.

NT Needs Substantive Help with Motivation; Doesn't Receive It

Non-Adaptive Support

One teacher in particular is very helpful--if you ask. But you cannot do that every day and also get lesson plans done. So there's no organized system to help me with lesson plans. I think its ridiculous to give a new teacher the same work load that a thirty year teacher has. It would be helpful to assign me a mentor and give him or both of us some time to work together. But it isn't done. There's not even a mentor teacher on site in our department. Instead, there's a series of Mentor Teachers you can call any time. The one for social studies is up at Columbia High. I've met him a couple of times at the district training, and he's said if you have any problems, give me a call. But the fact is, when I sit here and have to plan something for tomorrow, I can't call on such short notice. I could call him for something two weeks ahead, but I'm never that far ahead in my thinking and planning.

Lacks Access to Expertise of Colleagues

Formal Mentor Program is Non-Adaptive

I have two young kids, so my idea was not to take much home with me. My husband works some evenings, so often I need to be home by 4:00. I don't like to go home and have all that work hanging over my head. But sometimes I do an hour or so a couple of times a week. Generally what's been unsatisfying this year is that I can't seem to get ahead. I'm always just

Somewhat Disengaged from Teaching

barely ready for the class to come in. There's no time to reflect on the value of the lesson.

Vs. Kate Who Judged the Same Training Boring

The district training for new teachers was very very good. I went into it thinking, oh, God, two days before school and I have so much to do and this is the last thing I need. But they just gave you some real concrete things that you could do the first day of school. It was the resources of teachers who have been doing it for a long time coming together and giving you helpful things. And they way they presented it was through modeling each technique.

Importance of Adaptive Support and Training

I'm completely in charge of what happens in my classroom, but at a department level, there have been no decisions at all this year. Department meetings are once a month and are generally just about administrative items--things the administration wants us to do, reports on old business, airing of concerns. They listen to me as a new teacher. Everybody has a voice. But not a whole lot of things get resolved.

Department Interaction Lacks Substance

In relation to me as a new teacher, the department head asks me how things are going periodically. It's more just a pleasantry, a comment, rather than that he really wants to have any real feedback on how I'm doing. His role wasn't central to me. The administrators are accessible, but it's I that has to make the effort to seek help. One oversight is that I have not been evaluated. I should have something in my file by now saying he's good, bad or indifferent. I need some feedback from them to hear whether I'm doing a good job or a bad job. I'm sitting here in this little room conducting business with little to no feedback about the kind of job they think I'm doing.

NT Needs Are Not an Organizational Priority

Neutral Affect

I don't sense from any of those institutions--the district, the school or the department--that I've been given anything that's really strengthened my performance. The two district workshops and the new teacher training, I'd say yes. I enjoy those a lot--to get away and discuss with other colleagues. I wish I had more opportunity to do that. And possibly Ira has helped me. He's a very dedicated teacher after thirty years. He's still current, still working on lesson plans. He's a wealth of information, so when you go to him, he always has plenty of ideas. If I could just pick his brain regularly it would be great. So, whenever I seek help out, they give me the help I need. But I haven't been overwhelmed by help. I feel like I've been on my own.

Structure Isolates NT

Inadequate Access

This is a very good school. I see a real commitment to quality education from all people at this school. The chief concern seems to be the students, and that wasn't true of the school where I was last year. Not many teachers are disgruntled or just biding their time.

LESSON: If This Is As Good As It Gets, Then...

I love teaching, but I like the subject matter too much to remain at the high school level. If I stay in teaching, I would want to teach junior college or college--just for the simple luxury of saying, "class dismissed." You don't have to wait for the stupid bell to ring. Or if someone starts to give you trouble, you can just ask them to leave. I don't like having to be the babysitter, and too often it's reduced to that.

PROGNOSIS: I'll be Moving Along to Greener Pastures

Coached
KATE: Stepping Into a Niche

The department head had contact with me from the day I was hired on, trying to juggle an appropriate schedule for me. He's a very sensitive man. It was assumed I'd have to have three because I wanted to teach some drama as well as English; he tried to get me all in one room for the three English classes. When he got a schedule he was satisfied that I could handle, he let me know. Also, we had a two week paid summer workshop for all our English teachers this past summer. That helped me get familiar with the curriculum. So I feel like the department head in English really looks out for new teachers. He tries to make it even. He he tries to intercede between administration and teachers as far as room assignments and class loads go.

Structure Adaptive & Sensitive to Needs of NT

This second semester I've taken over for the woman on sabbatical. I have three beginning drama classes, one advanced drama class, and a period assigned to be responsible for the student leadership organization in the district. There are at least three evening meetings every week, so its turned out to be a lot more work than I expected. Even last semester when my teaching was more in English, I felt the same terrible time pressure. This is the major challenge--plus the frustration of not being able to do the job I'd like to do. Even if I'm home, I'm still not done; I should be up in my office; I should be working. And all there is to learn. I don't have a file cabinet of old things to pull out as a back up. I was doing everything for the first time for three different classes. Trying to do that and drama rehearsals is just too much.

Unusual Time Demands

The materials situation is also frustrating. When another teacher and I were teaching the Glass Menagerie, I wanted to keep my college prep classes and my generals on the same book in order to keep my work load manageable. I couldn't do that. We have no more than two or three class sets of any book. You can't collaborate when there aren't enough books. That's not fair. And the books are in very poor condition; pages are falling out; bindings are broken; pages are missing.

Lack of Materials
- *Increases Difficulty
- *Constrains Collaboration

I have one more frustration--and it's the money. I didn't go into teaching for the money. I worked in social service for four years, certainly not for the money. But money has a lot to do with self-esteem, and all my friends who are professionals, mostly in the corporate field, and are working far less hours than I am. Maybe I'm self-righteous, but I feel like I accomplish much more in a given morning than they do all day; yet I'm making half or a quarter of what most of them are making. And I just want to be appreciated for what I'm doing.

Status of Teaching Compares Poorly with Other Professions

Part of the reason I was anxious to get out of social work was that I was spending all my weekends, all my nights working. It was outrageous, especially for what I was being paid. So I was searching for a more normal career where I would have my weekends to myself and work hard during the week. The funny thing is I don't know why I thought teaching was more normal. It certainly is not. And I feel like I'm spending more time than I ever have before on my job. Last night I went home and I said to my husband, I don't think I can do more, but I still don't feel like I'm doing a good job. Now, despite all that, this might sound strange, but I'd rate myself a 10--with the stipulation that given the demands of this job, I'm doing the best that anyone could do.

Extreme Time Demands Compromise Long Range Commitment

Yet, Sense of Competence Remains High

I've felt equal bonding in drama and English. In English the teachers open their files for you and share resources and ideas continually. You mention that you don't have materials for a book, and a file appears. That sharing is really nice. In English there's been a lot of department decisionmaking because of the new district English curriculum. We've had to decide what we think would be best, what books we want to teach, etc. Department meetings are well organized. I feel I fit in well; my ideas were taken and attempted and my opinion seems to be valued by the department head and the other teachers.

Access to Expertise of Colleagues

Positive Affect

In the drama department, it was basically Sonia. She's shared everything with me. She was a former English teacher and she's helped me with both English and drama. At the start of the year she gave me advice, materials, resources, opportunities to get involved and learn about the drama program. It was wonderful training for taking on my own production this semester.

Adaptive Home-Grown Mentoring Vs. Non-Adaptive Formal Mentor Teacher Programs

My relationship with the the principal has been great. A couple of students early in the year wrote a letter to her about me and my teaching; they said that they have hated English in the past and that they love it now, and it was because of me and what I'd taught them. The principal called me into her office to show me the letter. She said that most teachers don't see a letter like this in all their career, and it's nice that you've seen it in your first few months. So she began to believe in me. It seems like every year for the last four years the principal has tried to hire new teachers trained at Stanford. There's been a positive prejudice towards that program.

Positive Affect from Principal

This school is pretty close to my ideal of a high school. The administration works with teachers, supports teachers, and the administration is open to new ideas. An example is the Shakespeare festival we're having this May. The idea first came up between Sonia and another English teacher. Now its grown to a schoolwide effort. It's an attempt to get a sense of community--to get parents, students and faculty together working.

Schoolwide Professional Community

So overall I feel lucky--like I got in the right school at the right time. I walked in at a time when there was someone else needed. I happened to have the same skills and background to hit it off with Sonia, and that's just meant everything as far as my opportunities and career go. I'd like to continue working at this school. I've set up a position for myself here, like a little niche. I walked into a <u>good</u> thing. The support system is now set up. Changing schools or districts would mean starting that all over again.

Support is
- *Crucial
- *Context-Specific
- *Develops Over Time

LESSON:
I've Made a Niche Here

As far as remaining in the profession of teaching, I'm not sure I can answer that. I like what I do. And if nothing in my life changed as far as raising a family, I'd remain. But I'm not sure that people can be a great teacher and be real happy with their career <u>and</u> have a great home life as well. Something has to give. That's been on my mind a lot because we're thinking about having kids and I don't think I can do both. I think I'm going to have to drop teaching. And that's not fair. You know, in other professions they just expect less of you, or people are able to have both career and family. It's not right that the best people for these jobs are not here simply because of the demands and the inability to have what you need to do a good job.

PROGNOSIS:
The Setting Stimulates, But Wears; A Short, Bright Career Ends When the Stork Arrives

6. SOCIALIZATION THEORY REVISITED

The four case studies reveal striking differences in the nature of the working conditions experienced by Alex, Michael, Ginny and Kate. How might these differences reflect variation in the process of socialization--functional versus interactive? Does a single process of socialization underlie the four types? If not, which types represent functional socialization and which align more closely with interactive processes?

The Typology and Alternative Models of Socialization

I begin with the extreme types: nurtured and tested. Alex's working conditions were favorable in both difficulty and support; Michael's were uniformly unfavorable. In interactional socialization, the individual is an active participant who's unique characteristics in part shape the nature of experiences during entry. Alex's account of the first year is filled with instances which show how the organization was responsive to his unique characteristics, preferences, and needs as a new teacher--the Mr. Wizard days, the superconductor experiment, the paid time to select his own text. Michael, on the other hand, had few such opportunities; in fact, in several instances his expressed needs or preferences were rejected or ignored. The failed request to initiate a peer tutoring program; the lack of opportunities to observe others teach and to receive feedback; the pressure surrounding the honors program; the lack of "hands-on" help--all of these experiences reveal functional socialization in a school interested in molding a passive individual to fit existing organizational priorities. The cradle of interactive support and stimulation that Alex experienced is akin to the process of interactive socialization; conversely, the crucible of performance pressure, rejection of individual creativity, and indifference to preferences expressed by Michael reflects a functional approach to socialization.

And what of the mixed types: coached and ignored? Here we have teachers with favorable conditions on one dimension and unfavorable on the other. Which dimension, if either, determines the underlying process of socialization? Kate, like Michael, spoke emotionally about the difficulties and time demands of her assignment. Yet despite these difficulties, Kate

felt stimulated, respected, and downright "lucky" to have "walked into the right place at the right time." The drama teacher who took her under wing, the schoolwide Shakespeare festival, the principal's personal support, the department head who respects the training and preferences of new teachers--all of these reveal a relatively cradled setting in which socialization is an interactive, dynamic process between individual and organization. In Ginny's case, the organization maintains a studied distance, refraining from the overt pressure and rejection Michael experienced, but nonetheless, clearly at arm's length in terms of sensitivity to her needs. Witness the miscommunication about the replacement status of the job opening, the lack of formal evaluation, the difficulty of connecting to a mentor or colleague for help in planning, and the pleasant, but detached attitude of the department head. Ginny's crucible, lacking the expressed pressure and rejection experienced by Michael, is akin to purgatory. Ginny seems to be placed "on hold"--babysitting-- within an organization which, like her personnel director, won't interact with individual new teachers in the meaningful ways required for professional growth and personal satisfaction.

Which process of socialization a new teacher undergoes--and concurrently, whether the teacher falls into the cradle or the crucible--is more closely allied with factors of support than with factors of difficulty. High support seems to reflect a process of interactive socialization, one in which the new teacher feels relatively cradled within the school organization; in the case of nurtured teachers, the cradle is lined with a more favorable level of difficulty than for those who were coached. Conversely, low support reflects a process of functional socialization; for tested teachers, like Michael, the crucible of low support is relatively more painful than for those who were ignored.

A full analysis of the marginal notes--and their implications for the design and management of first year experiences for new teachers--is beyond the scope of this paper. Certainly there is abundant food for thought.

Implications

In summary, this study employed purposive sampling to identify a range of working conditions for new teachers. A two dimensional typology captured the differences observed among thirteen beginning high school teachers. An important next task is to explore the frequency of the four types--nurtured, coached, ignored and tested--in a representative sample of high schools. Given what we know from past research and the present study, the proportion of new teachers who experience ignored and tested working conditions is likely to be much greater than observed here. In light of such a likelihood, researchers, policymakers and practicing administrators might also wish to consider:

1. What consequences are associated with variations in working conditions?

2. How do variations in working conditions arise within and across the contexts of particular districts, schools and departments?

3. What kind of entry experiences--functional versus interactive--seem most suited to promoting the professional development and job satisfaction of high performing new teachers?

4. Is there an ideal level of difficulty and a "perfect" set of support experiences appropriate for all teachers? That is, to what degree should administrators and policymakers view working conditions as static and objective versus as dynamic and dependent on the interaction of the individual and the organization?

5. What are the developmental needs of new teachers in terms of level of difficulty and level of support?

6. What policies and practices might promote greater sensitivity among districts, schools and departments to the developmental needs of new teachers?

7. What is the role of formal "model" programs of induction as opposed to enriching the site-specific context in which beginning teachers labor?

7. CONCLUSION

Alex, Michael, Ginny, and Kate entered different high school worlds. Their accounts reveal vivid contrasts in the nature of their experiences during the first year. These differences become more comprehensible when viewed through the lens of a typology of working conditions--one which encompasses the dimensions of level of difficulty of the assignment and level and type of support. The constructs developed in this research provide a more precise descriptive understanding of the range of working conditions new teachers might encounter depending on the school setting.

The value of the typology, however, extends beyond the refinement of descriptive factors. A meaningful typology provides an instrument for exploring the relationship between working conditions and consequences such as performance, commitment and retention. If working conditions influence such outcomes, the next crucial question is how working conditions come to vary across settings. Echoing Kate's closing words,

"It's not right that the best people for these jobs are not here simply because of the demands and the inability to have what you need to do a good job."

To the degree that the typology captures valid distinctions among "the demands" and "having what you need," it becomes a central tool for building further understanding of the role of working conditions in attracting and retaining talented public school teachers.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS OF THIRTEEN NEW TEACHERS

District n = 3	New Teacher n = 13	School n = 6	Community/ Students	Department n = 8
Smathers	Michael	Aiers	Suburban; white; middle class	English
	2	"	"	"
	3	Mission	Suburban; white; middle class	English
	4	"	"	"
	Kate	Holbrook	Surburban; white; middle class	English
	6	"	"	"
	Ginny	"	"	Social studies
Pineville	Alex	Athens	Surburban; white; upper & mid. class	Science
	9	Washington	Medium size town; diverse; mid. & working class	Science
Milton	10	Perry	Medium size town; diverse; mid. & working class	Science
	11	"	"	"
	12	"	"	English
	13	"	"	"

APPENDIX B

PROPOSITION AND PROTOTYPES GUIDING DATA ANALYSIS

A central analytic tool will be pattern matching--the comparison of data for each teacher with two hypothetical patterns derived from a review of the literature. The following prototypes provide the decision rules for determining if a given teacher's working conditions match one of these prototypes--and thus substantiate the proposition, or, alternatively, if they do not match--and thus signal the need to reformulate the proposition.

PROPOSITION: The working conditions of new teachers vary from favorable to unfavorable on two dimensions.

	PROTOTYPE A Favorable	PROTOTYPE B Unfavorable
DIFFICULTY		
# of Preps	2 or less	3 or more
Kinds of Stu's	Not viewed as difficult by dept members	Viewed as difficult
Misassignment	Has formal education or experience or backgr	Does not have
# Room Changes	One room or one change only	More than one change
SUPPORT		
Respect	NT gives examples of positive judgments & respect fr. colleagues	NT gives examples of negative judgments & lack of respect
Acceptance	NT gives examples of social acceptance; treated as an insider; included in social interaction	NT gives examples of being isolated
Curr. Info & Guidelines	NT given ample info, verbal or written, so curr is fairly clear	NT given insufficient info to make curr clear
Planning	An experienced colleague plans for each prep with the NT	NT plans with little or no help
Materials	Colleagues share materials, dittoes, text recommends, outlines, lecture notes	NT finds, prepares w/ little or no help

Feedback	Opportunities to observe others teach; observed informally by colleague with valued feedback about the observation	No opportunities to observe others; obs. for formal eval only; no valued feedback
Oppor's to Acq Skills/Knowl	5 or more trn'ing sessions, workshops, conferences, meetings rated by the NT as personally valuable for new skills/knowledge	Less than 5 and/or these sessions rated unhelpful

APPENDIX C

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Indicators and Decision Rules

INDICATORS:	DECISION RULE Hi if...	Lo if...
Task Characteristics		
1. Number of preparations	3 or more	2 or 1
2. Number of rooms	2 if NT says caused diff's; otherwise 3	1 or 2
3. Match between experience, background, training, preference and topic of course assignment	NT says n/ like assn; n/ feel qualified	NT says likes assn; happy w/ it; feels qualified
4. Track or ability of students	All low or 1 or more honors	All college prep or mix CP and NCP
5. Age/grade level of students	2 or more 9th and/or 12th	less than 2 9th and/or 12th
6. Adequacy of written information, guidelines, course outlines or specifications	NT says not adequate	NT says adequate
7. Adequacy of basic textbooks and equipment for course assignments	NT says not adequate	NT says adequate
Expectations & Opportunities		
8. Paid opportunity to prepare, plan, train during summer (does not include NT work days just prior to school opening); AND/OR the NT did student teaching at that HS during the previous year	yes	no
9. Extraordinary time demands associated with the course assignment; AND/OR many hours of preparation/paperwork associated with the assignment	NT describes long days, eves, wkends as typical; and/or 5 Eng Writing sec's	mentions few

10. Fixed performance pressure from the organization. This means the NT feels an implicit or explicit pressure from others to perform at the level of a veteran. The pressure may result from the public nature of the teaching assignment or from a high level of expectation set by the principal and/ or department head	NT feels uncomf about pressure to perform; feels judged; feels under scrutiny, overt and/or covert	No problem mentioned in this regard
11. Employment status for next year	Fairly certain	Very uncertain

OVERALL LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Hi = 5/11 or more rated Hi Lo = 4/11 or less rated Hi

APPENDIX D

LEVEL OF SUPPORT: Indicators and Decision Rules

INDICATORS:	DECISION RULE Hi if...	Lo if...
Social and Emotional Support		
1. Feels respect of vets and administrators for being a qualified and well trained new teacher	Yes	No
2. Given consideration, sensitivity, and communication/information about employment situation for next year	No	Yes
3. Feels emotional acceptance, warmth, acknowledgement for time and effort put in as a NT	No	Yes
4. Administrators provide avenues of safe help for problems which may arise; NT feels little need to hide problems	Yes	No
5. The department, school and/or district provides opportunities for the NT to be creative, innovative, or express his identity and interests and preferences; personal initiative to innovate welcomed	Yes	No
Substantive Quality of Support		
6. Adequate assistance for each prep in planning and sharing of teaching materials	Yes	No
7. Valued feedback/reflection after being observed or observing teaching	Yes, several times	Rare to none
8. Value/quality of formal training, workshops	NT says mostly valuable	Several criticisms
9. Value/quality of informal interaction with veteran teachers, administrators	Valued	Not valued or problemmatic
10. Value/quality/substance of department decisionmaking	Admired; hi efficacy	Critiqued
11. Extent of expertise/knowledge among department and school colleagues	Many teachers named as expert	Few or none

12. Schoolwide personnel, resources, programs--APs, counselors, secretaries, librarians, clerks, computers, resource centers, etc.	Many mentioned as helpful	Few examples
<u>Format or Structure of Support</u>		
13. Opportunity to observe other teachers teaching/be observed	Yes, several times	Rare to none
14. Adequacy of access to expertise, knowledge of collegues	Plentiful; satisfying	Infrequent snippets; unsatisfying
15. Adaptive help frequently available. This means the content and form of help often adjusts to fit the needs or individual characteristics of the NT; opportunities to tailor the amount, timing, type of help to suit NT expressed needs	Mentions several instances	Complains that several forms of support were not helpful; few or no instances
16. The department head or some veteran teacher or administrator or group of people serve as an advocate for the NT--a spokesman or protector of the NT vis-a-vis other teachers or the administration when issues or conflicts arise	Yes	No
17. Amount of opportunities for formal training, workshops	5 days or more	Less than 5
18. Amount of opportunities for informal interaction with veteran teachers, administrators	Plentiful	Sparse
19. Frequency of participation in department decisionmaking (formal and informal)	At least monthly	Less than monthly
20. Administrative attitudes, policies support a stable classroom teaching environment	Yes or no problems mentioned	No; several problems mentioned

<u>OVERALL LEVEL OF SUPPORT</u>: Hi = 11/20 or more rated Hi Lo = 10/20 or less rated Hi

APPENDIX E

FACTOR COMPARISON FOR SIX PAIRINGS OF WORKING CONDITION TYPES

Decision Rules: Nurtured, Coached, Tested each had 3 NTs. Ignored had 4 NTs. Thus comparisons involved how many "high" scores out of 3; where Ignored were compared, comparison was number out of 4 versus number out of 3.

v = very different = difference of 3 or 4

s = somewhat different = difference of 2 (or, in one case 3/3 vs. 2/4)

no difference = even or all in one group and all in the other or only 1 teacher difference either way.

The numbers in the columns represent the factor numbers listed in Appendix C for Difficulty Factors and Appendix D for Support Factors. The fraction in parentheses represents the number of factors that differed out of 11 or 20.

COMPARISON of...	OF 11 DIFFICULTY FACTORS, These Factors Differed	Of 20 SUPPORT FACTORS, These Factors Differed
Nurtured vs. Tested	v--6, 8, 10 s--3, 5, 9 (6/11)	v--1, 4, 9, 15, 16 s--3, 7, 10, 13, 14, 18, 20 (12/20)
Coached vs. Ignored	v--none s--6, 7, 9 (3/11)	v--2, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14, 18 s--5, 6, 8, 13, 15, 16 (13/20)
Nurtured vs. Coached	v--none s--2, 8, 9 (3/11)	v--8 s--6 (2/20)
Ignored vs. Tested	v--10 s--3, 8, 9 (4/11)	v--1, 4, 11, 20 s--3 (5/20)
Nurtured vs. Ignored	v--none s--2, 6 (2/11)	v--9, 18 s--2, 5, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16 (11/20)
Coached vs. Tested	v--6, 10 s--none (2/11)	v--1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16 s--2, 3, 6, 13, 18, 20 (15/20)